



**Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training**

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[www.post.ca.gov](http://www.post.ca.gov)

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Subject: **Peace Officer Citizenship Requirement: US Passports Acceptable As Proof**

Government Code section [1031](#) requires every peace officer to be “*a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien who is eligible for and has applied for citizenship, except as provided in Section 2267 of the Vehicle Code* (for CHP candidates).” Citizenship must be acquired within three years of employment (Government Code [§1031.5](#)).

Commission Regulation [1953\(e\)\(1\)](#) specifies that proof of citizenship “*shall consist of an official government-issued birth certificate, naturalization documentation, or other citizenship documentation deemed acceptable by POST.*” Primarily candidates have provided naturalization papers or birth certificates to meet this requirement. On occasion candidates are unable to provide naturalization paperwork due to either having acquired citizenship through naturalized parents or having lost or misplaced their naturalization certificate. In most cases, these individuals possess a US Passport. In the past, POST has been hesitant to accept passports primarily because they can be issued to [non-citizen US nationals](#), however, this only applies to individuals from American Samoa, Swains Islands and Northern Mariana Islands.

Per [22 U.S. Code § 2705](#), a valid US passport issued by the State Department has “*the same force and effect as proof of United States citizenship as certificates of naturalization...*” In light of this and in keeping with POST’s ongoing mission to assist departments with recruitment needs, POST will now accept valid US passports or passport cards to meet the citizenship requirement with the exception of candidates from one of the three aforementioned US territories (American Samoa, Swains Islands and Northern Mariana Islands). Those individuals must provide naturalization documentation.

POST will require that the inside page of the passport containing identifying information be copied. If the US passport card is used, both sides are to be copied. Consistent with current requirements, copies must include an attestation that the original was reviewed by the background investigator. POST regulations will not be affected by this new policy as passports fall under “*other citizenship documentation deemed acceptable by POST.*” However, Tab H: Citizenship/Age Verification of the peace officer background tabs has been updated and revisions to the POST Background Investigation Manual will reflect this new policy.

Please direct questions regarding citizenship documentation requirements to your [Regional Consultant](#) or to [Melani Singley](#), Selection Standards Program Consultant at (916) 227-4258.

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